

Testimony

Submitted to the

Education Committee

March 23, 2009

SENATE BILL NO. 1139 AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS AND THE ELIMINATION OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS  
FOR COOPERATIVE REGIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES).

Good afternoon Senator Gaffey and Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Sharon Strong and I am a resident of Simsbury. I am writing this letter to ask you to vote no on Senate Bill No. 1139.

As a family we have had a connection with CREC Soundbridge for over 20 years. Both of my children are hearing impaired and would not be where they are today without the help of Soundbridge. The state of the art facility has been able to provide services for my children throughout their educational years, birth-3 thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Both of my children attended Soundbridge where they were able to receive services that were totally dedicated to their hearing impairment disability which in turn enabled them to learn to use their residual hearing and become oral communicators. My daughter is presently in college and would not be there if it wasn't for the dedicated and specialized programs she received in her elementary years at the Soundbridge Center. Those services have made it possible for her to attain her goal of attending college and becoming a productive member of society.

Over the years we have witnessed the ability of Soundbridge's services to keep up with the state of the art technology in thanks to the state funding. These services include the programming of cochlear implant devices which provide my children with the best possible hearing technology has to offer. My son, who attended Soundbridge for his elementary school years and is now attending Simsbury High School continues to receive his audiological services from Soundbridge's well equipped and expertly staffed audiology department.

Regional centers like this one and others for children with other disabilities simply cannot be replicated in each district. That would be fiscally imprudent.

Please do not support SB 1139 so that these opportunities continue to exist for my children and all children that follow.